

**Access to Microfinance & Improved Implementation of Policy Reform  
(AMIR Program)**

**Funded By U.S. Agency for International Development**

Leadership Development Technical Assistance

Final Report

Deliverable for Business Associations Component

Task 2.3.8

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## Executive Summary

My assignment for the S.O.W. 2.3.8 was to provide leadership development technical assistance to the personnel of the AMIR selected Jordanian business associations.

To complete this assignment, I carried out the following tasks:

1. On April 15 and 16, I conducted one training seminar discussing specific skills of leadership for elected officials including chairs and board members of AMIR selected business associations.
2. On April 17, I conducted one training seminar discussing specific skills of leadership for committee members of those business associations.
3. On April 18, I conducted one training seminar discussing specific skills of leadership for staff members of the same business associations.
4. On April 19, I conducted one training seminar discussing specific skills of leadership for staff and members of other than AMIR selected Jordanian business associations.

The leadership training course was designed to define the roles of board members, staff, and committee members, to discuss “best practices” of association operations, and to discuss leadership and organization tools that help in policy development, that assist in refining association strategies, and that improve public policy advocacy programs. These techniques, which are used by leaders to motivate their followers and produce results for their organizations, should be useful in improving the operations of the Jordanian business associations.

The seminar topics included:

- I. The Art of Leadership
- II. Board Leadership Tools
- III. Public Policy Advocacy Tools
- IV. Personal Skills for Leaders

The complete presentations are included in the Appendices. Attendance at the sessions included forty-seven (47) association personnel who also listed in the Appendices.

## **Contract Assignment**

### **Seminars for Business Association Personnel**

As reported in previous assignments for technical assistance in leadership training, the skills involved in leadership are relatively well documented in the voluminous literature now available. Carefully selecting key concepts from this literature and from personal experience, I developed Power Point Presentations that I believed illustrated the skills necessary to improve the leadership capabilities of the men and women involved in the Jordanian business associations. The topic outline and presentation slides for this seminar are included in the appendices. Utilizing a discussion format for all four seminars, we discussed the specific leadership skills and techniques and related them to the current business association environment in Jordan.

### **Assessment of the Impact of Seminars**

From the reaction of the participants, I believe these seminars will improve the overall leadership capabilities of the business associations. In-depth discussions about how leadership affects the results produced by the associations were very intense and enlightening, both to the instructor and to the participants. It was interesting to watch the reactions as certain concepts were explained. The audience became fully involved in discussing how these ideas could change their methods of operation. They continually identified obstacles to implementing more productive leadership techniques because of customs or resistance by others in their associations. It was extremely helpful to them to identify these obstacles and the discussions on how to overcome social and political barriers they face. I detected a new resolve that seemed to evolve in the attitude of the participants about the opportunities for change that were present in their circumstances.

## **Examples of Material**

As an example, most business associations have been somewhat reluctant to have a strong public policy advocacy program because of concerns about reprisals from taking a too-active role in the political life of Jordan. Those concerns seemed to be put in proper perspective by the seminar participants when the methods of effective lobbying techniques were discussed. The participants discovered that associations around the world are purveying information to government officials who really need and want to be informed on how laws and regulations affect various constituencies. Case studies from Bolivia, Ghana, and the Philippines were presented and discussed in small group breakout sessions. These examples seemed to mollify their concerns when they discovered that lobbying is a mechanism for helping officialdom, not to threaten it.

## **Additional Elements of Discussion**

Other elements of the discussions were also well-received, including the specific discussions of improving time management, hiring staff, making meetings effective, making decisions, and learning to delegate duties and responsibilities. In addition, the participants were exposed to techniques for negotiating, making decisions, making better presentations, writing good reports, reducing stress, improving meetings, and managing teams.

## **Summary and Recommendations**

### **Summary**

The consulting assignment was successful from the point-of-view that I have exposed some of the key people of the Jordanian business associations to new theories and techniques of leadership. Over a short period of time, specific changes in leadership styles should become apparent. I believe improving the overall capacity of the personnel involved is an evolutionary process that will take place one action or one decision at a time over a period of months. The major thrust am convinced that the information delivered at the seminars have the potential of having a major impact on the leadership skills of the targeted group.

### **Recommendations**

One major problem identified by the seminar participants was the fact that there are very few qualified applicants for employment as staff for associations in Jordan. To improve the personnel pool in the nation and the general region, I recommend that a professional society be established called either the Middle Eastern Society of Association Executives or the Arab Society of Association Executives. This new organization should be based on the model of the American Society of Association Executives and should provide programs to improve the leadership and management skills of its members and those wishing to enter the field. Eventually, association management throughout the Middle East can become a profession similar to accountants, engineers, and lawyers. Certification can be part of the new society's agenda. This type of organization, over a period of time, will improve the caliber of people applying for management positions in the associations of Jordan and will thereby improve the effectiveness of the organizations.

From an administrative point-of-view, a lesson should be learned from this consultancy experience: seminars of this nature must be marketed. Invitations and promotional literature must bombard the potential participants over a long period of time in order to have sufficient attendance; therefore, setting dates and acquiring expert presenters should be made achieved well in advance of the actual seminar. A simple letter of invitation with telephone follow-up calls to participants is not an effective means of attracting a sufficient size audience to justify the expenditure involved. A marketing plan and budget should be included in the standard SOW approval process.



# **Appendix One – Leadership Development Seminar for Chairmen and Board Members**

# **Appendix Two – Leadership Development Seminar for Committee Members**

## **Appendix Three – Leadership Development Seminar for Association Staff**